

# Backcountry Camping Planner

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore



## Backcountry Permits

Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore backcountry offers opportunities for solitude, inspiration, physical challenge, and renewal. The North Country National Scenic Trail passes through the 42 mile long park and runs adjacent to Lake Superior. Backcountry camping is available at 14 campsites (each with multiple sites).

A backcountry camping permit is required for all overnight stays in the backcountry. The permit is valid only for the dates, locations and party size specified. Permits are not required for day hiking; however, day hikers must observe all backcountry regulations.

The key to a successful trip is careful planning and preparation. Please read this publication thoroughly. When planning your itinerary, keep in mind the time of year, terrain, weather, and the physical condition of everyone in your party. Remember you can only travel as fast as the slowest person in your group. Each campsite has restrictions on group

size, water access, wood fires and length of stay.

Individual campsites are available for camping parties of 1-6 people (2 tent/hammock limit). Groups of 7-20 people must camp in designated group sites.

### Reservations

All backcountry campsites must be reserved through Recreation.gov or by calling: 1-877-444-6777. International callers: 1-518-885-3635.

There is a reservation fee of \$15, and a user fee of \$5 per person, per night. There are no refunds after your permit has been printed off. Permits can be printed as early as 14 days prior to your trip. After you print the permit, no changes can be made. You can print your permit the day of your trip as well, if you do not print your permit by 4:30 the start of your trip, you will be considered a “no show” and your sites will be given up.



## Winter Camping

Winter camping regulations permit camping outside of designated sites. A snow depth of 6 inches or more is required for winter camping rules to take effect. A backcountry camping permit is required year-round. The fee is \$5 per person, per night (\$15 reservation fee). Winter camping information and backcountry regulations are listed on page 3.





# Black Bears and YOU

To protect yourself and the bears, follow these simple steps.

Don't let your actions cause a bear or other animal to be relocated or destroyed. A bear has an acute sense of smell. If you leave food out and unattended, you are inviting a bear into your camp. Why? A bear conditioned to human food is more likely to be aggressive and, subsequently, to injure or kill people in an attempt to obtain this easy source of food. When such a bear poses a risk of injuring someone, it is often necessary to destroy that bear.



**Store**  
Store food in the food storage locker or hang on the food storage poles located in each backcountry campground. Store anything possibly edible by a bear such as food, food scraps, trash, toothpaste, medications, lip balm and cosmetics. When using the food storage pole, hang only a food bag - not the entire pack (which may bend the pole and make it unusable).

**Clean**  
Keep your campsite clean. Take food out of the food locker or down from the pole only when actively engaged in preparing, eating, or cleaning up your meal. At all other times, store those items including food scraps and trash. Never take food in your tent.

**Noisy and BIG**  
If a bear challenges you for your food, make noise, assume a “large” stance, and get others to help you. If the bear shows aggressive behavior (e.g. growling, “chuffing” or physically challenging you) slowly back away from the animal, maintaining your stance and noise.

**Report**  
Report any bear/human interactions to park staff at 906-387-3700.



## Be Prepared

### Weather

The weather at Pictured Rocks can be unpredictable. High winds and storm conditions on Lake Superior are common. The area is the second-most cloudy region of the United States, characterized by an annual mean cloud cover of 70 percent. Much of the cloudiness occurs in autumn and winter, and can be attributed to cool air flowing over Lake Superior being warmed along the shore and forming clouds. This often results in rain, fog, and snow. Spring is relatively clear due to the cold water surface of the lake. The average summer daytime temperatures are in the low 70s.

| Month     | Avg. high temp. | Avg. low temp.   | Avg. precip. | Avg. snowfall |
|-----------|-----------------|------------------|--------------|---------------|
| January   | 25.1 °F -3.8 °C | 10.7 °F -11.8 °C | 3.03 inches  | 41.6 inches   |
| February  | 27.5 °F -2.5 °C | 11.5 °F -11.3 °C | 1.59         | 19.2          |
| March     | 35.3 °F 1.8 °C  | 19.8 °F -6.7 °C  | 2.16         | 16.3          |
| April     | 46.3 °F 7.9 °C  | 29.9 °F -1.1 °C  | 1.83         | 6.1           |
| May       | 61.2 °F 16.2 °C | 40.0 °F 4.4 °C   | 2.85         | 0.7           |
| June      | 70.2 °F 21.2 °C | 49.7 °F 9.8 °C   | 2.68         | 0             |
| July      | 74.1 °F 21.8 °C | 55.6 °F 13.1 °C  | 3.36         | 0             |
| August    | 74.1 °F 23.3 °C | 55.6 °F 13.1 °C  | 3.20         | 0             |
| September | 65.7 °F 18.7 °C | 48.4 °F 9.1 °C   | 3.60         | 0             |
| October   | 53.6 °F 12 °C   | 37.9 °F 4.2 °C   | 3.99         | 2.9           |
| November  | 39.4 °F 4.1 °C  | 27.2 °F -2.6 °C  | 3.26         | 16.3          |
| December  | 29.1 °F -1.6 °C | 16.4 °F -8.6 °C  | 2.99         | 37.6          |



### Mosquito and Flies

In mid-spring to early summer, mosquitoes and black flies are the most prevalent insects in Pictured Rocks. Deer flies and horse flies appear by mid-summer, generally when the mosquitoes and black flies decrease in number. In mid to late summer, the stable fly appears on Pictured Rocks beaches, and tends to bite legs and ankles. It is always best to play it safe and avoid being bitten by mosquitoes and biting flies. Use protective clothing or insect repellent, and carry an allergy medicine or antihistamine in case of an allergic reaction.

### Hiking During Hunting Season

When you are enjoying the park during the fall and winter months you may see a few hunters on the trails. Hunting is allowed after Labor Day weekend through April 1 of each year. For safety reasons, we recommend you wear a visible blaze orange piece of clothing such as a vest or hat to be easily identified to others.



# Be Prepared

## Regulations

- ◆ A backcountry camping permit including payment of fee is required.
- ◆ A backcountry camping permit allows occupancy of the campsite until noon of the day the party is scheduled to leave.
- ◆ No pets or domesticated animals.
- ◆ Camp only in designated sites and follow permit itinerary.
- ◆ Store all food in bear boxes.
- ◆ 6 people maximum for individual sites, 2 tents or 2 hammocks (or combinations thereof) maximum per individual site.
- ◆ 7-20 maximum people must use Group Sites.
- ◆ Pitch tents or hammocks within 15 feet of the numbered post, keeping within existing impacted area.
- ◆ Campfires allowed only in communal metal fire rings. Use only down and dead wood.
- ◆ No campfires at Chapel Beach Campsite or Mosquito River Campsite.
- ◆ No beach fires ever.
- ◆ No axes or hatchets.
- ◆ Pack out all trash.
- ◆ No bikes, wheeled or motorized vehicles.
- ◆ Use vault toilets, or bury human waste in cat holes 6 -8 inches deep, 200 feet away from water, campsite or trail.
- ◆ No glass containers.
- ◆ Kayaker/ paddlers must check into visitor centers before starting trip.



## Water Treatment

Backcountry water may look clean and refreshing, but contaminants such as the microscopic protozoan *Giardia lamblia* may be present. Ingesting giardia can cause giardiasis, an intestinal disorder that may appear weeks after your trip. As a safeguard, boil water for one full minute or filter it through a one micron filter before using. If staying at Trappers Lake, ask visitor center staff for current water quality information.

## Emergency Communication and Cell Phones

Backcountry cell phone users should not count on their cell phones as a reliable means of emergency communication because many areas do not offer reception. Satellite phones typically have better coverage, but are not 100% reliable due to varying satellite coverage. Regardless of whether you carry a phone, all backcountry visitors should have a plan for what to do in case of an emergency. And tell someone your itinerary.

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## Winter Regulations

*A snow depth of six inches is required for these rules to take effect;*

- ◆ A designated campsite is not required for winter camping.
- ◆ Camping is not allowed in areas shown as closed to hunting on the approved Lakeshore Hunting Closure Map (except drive in campgrounds).
- ◆ Winter camping must be at least 100 feet from any creek, river, lake, and road. Camping on all frozen inland lakes is prohibited.
- ◆ Camping is prohibited on frozen surfaces of Lake Superior within ¼ mile of the park shoreline.
- ◆ Store all food in bear boxes.
- ◆ A maximum of 20 people and 10 tents on a permit in a given winter backcountry camping area.
- ◆ No fires unless in designated campfire rings or with a backpacking stove.
- ◆ Use vault toilets, or bury human waste in cat hole 6 -8 inches deep, 200 feet away from water (including frozen water bodies), campsite or trail.
- ◆ No axes or hatchets.
- ◆ Pack out all trash.
- ◆ No glass containers.
- ◆ No bikes, wheeled or motorized vehicles
- ◆ No pets or domesticated animals.

# Trailheads and Shuttles

|  |                                  |
|--|----------------------------------|
| There are 15 trailheads in Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore. Trailhead locations from west to east: |                                  |
| 1. Munising Falls  | 9. Twelvemile Beach              |
| 2. Sand Point  | 10. Hurricane River              |
| 3. Miner Castle  | 11. Log Slide                    |
| 4. Miners Beach West   | 12. Grand Sable Lake Overlook    |
| 5. Miners Beach East   | 13. Grand Sable Lake Picnic Area |
| 6. Little Beaver Lake  | 14. Grand Sable Visitor Center   |
| 7. Beaver Basin Overlook   | 15. Sable Falls                  |
| 8. Chapel Road Parking Lot   |                                  |

## Hiking Tips from a Park Ranger

When hiking in the backcountry, most people will average about 2 to 3 miles per hour. Hiking on a backcountry trail can be more strenuous than walking on a paved or gravel path in your neighborhood park. The trail system varying terrain including fairly level trail with few obstacles, narrow and root covered trail, hills with rustic stairs, and hard pack or soft sand.

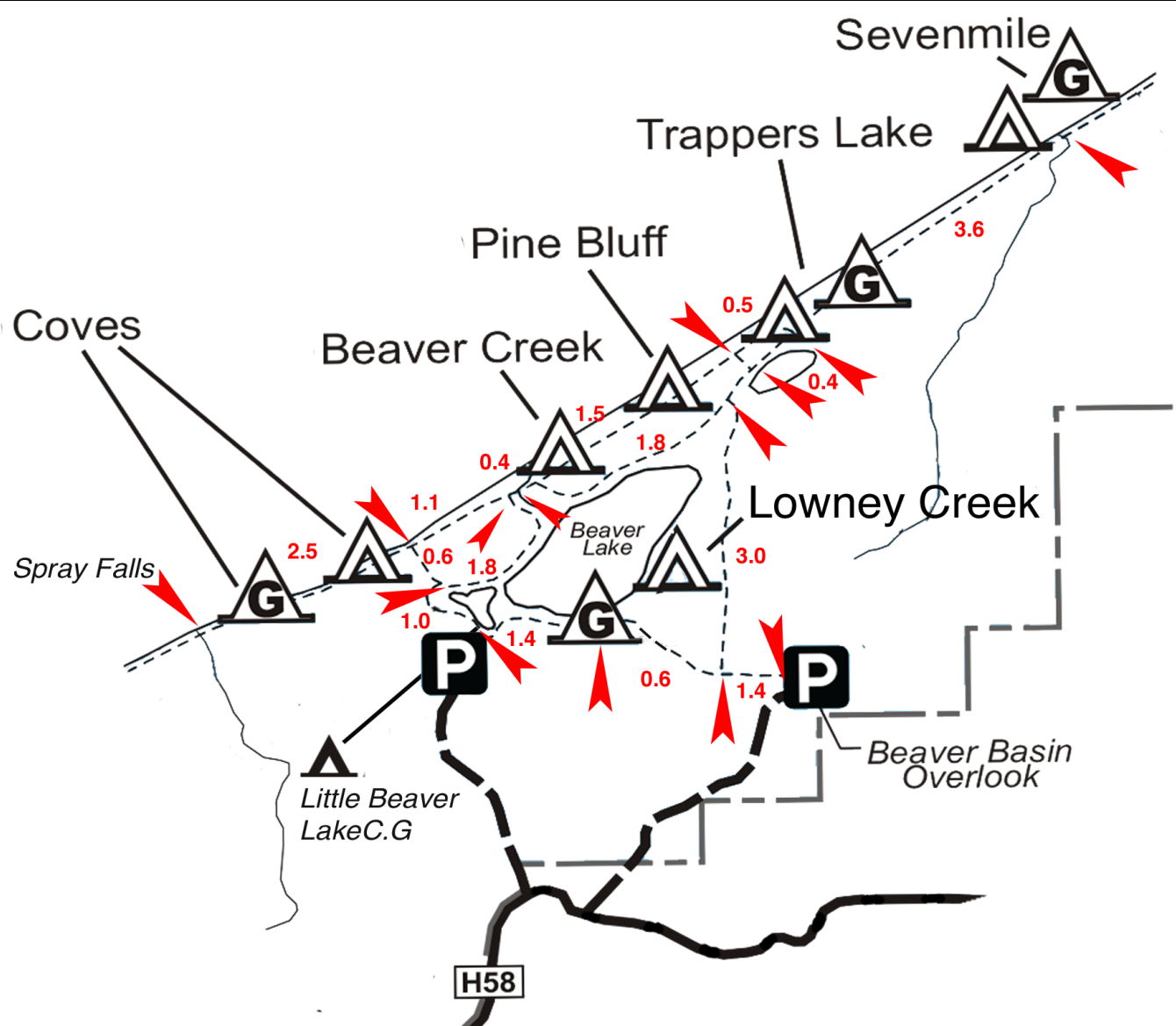
## Shuttle Service Tips

1. If you are going to use a shuttle service, always make a reservation,
2. Park your vehicle at your ending location and ride the shuttle to your starting location. That way you will not have to be in a hurry to catch the shuttle at a specific time on your last day. Your vehicle will wait for you; the shuttle will not.
3. Make sure you have your car keys and keep them in a safe place during your trip.

# Backcountry Campsites

| Campsite Name                   | Size | Backcountry Pit Toilet | Site Information and Restrictions  |
|---------------------------------|------|------------------------|--|
| Cliffs                          | 3    | Yes                    | One designated fire ring, no water   |
| Cliffs Group                    |      | Yes                    | One designated fire ring, no water   |
| Potato patch                    | 3    | Yes                    | One designated fire right, no water  |
| Mosquito River Group            |      | Yes                    | No fires, water source is Mosquito River or Lake Superior                  |
| Mosquito River                  | 5    | Yes                    | No fires, water source is Mosquito River or Lake Superior                  |
| Chapel                          | 6    | Yes                    | No fires, water source is Chapel Creek and Lake Superior                   |
| Coves Group                     |      | Yes                    | One designated fire ring, water source is Lake Superior                    |
| Coves                           | 5    | Yes                    | One designated fire ring, water source is Lake Superior                    |
| Lowney Creek Group              | 4    | No                     | One designated fire ring, water source is Beaver Lake and Lowney Creek     |
| Lowney Creek                    |      | No                     | One designated fire ring, water source is Beaver Lake and Lowney Creek     |
| Beaver Creek                    | 6    | Yes                    | One designated fire ring, water source is Beaver Creek or Lake Superior    |
| Pine Bluff                      | 5    | Yes                    | One designated fire ring, water source is Lake Superior                    |
| Trappers Lake                   | 5    | Yes                    | One designated fire ring, water source is Lake Superior                    |
| Trappers Lake Group             |      | Yes                    | One designated fire ring, water source is Lake Superior                    |
| Sevenmile Creek                 | 5    | No                     | One designated fire ring, water source is Sevenmile Creek or Lake Superior |
| Sevenmile Creek Group           |      | No                     | One designated fire ring, water source is Sevenmile Creek or Lake Superior |
| Benchmark                       | 3    | Yes                    | One designated fire ring, water source is Lake Superior                    |
| Au Sable Point East Group       |      | Yes                    | One designated fire ring, water source is Lake Superior                    |
| Au Sable Point East             | 3    | Yes                    | One designated fire ring, water source is Lake Superior                    |
| Masse Homestead                 | 3    | No                     | One designated fire ring, no water   |
| Masse Homestead Group           |      | No                     | One designated fire ring, no water   |
| Grand Sable Lake (Boat in Only) | 1    | Yes                    | One designated fire ring, water source is Grand Sable Lake                 |

# Trail Mileage

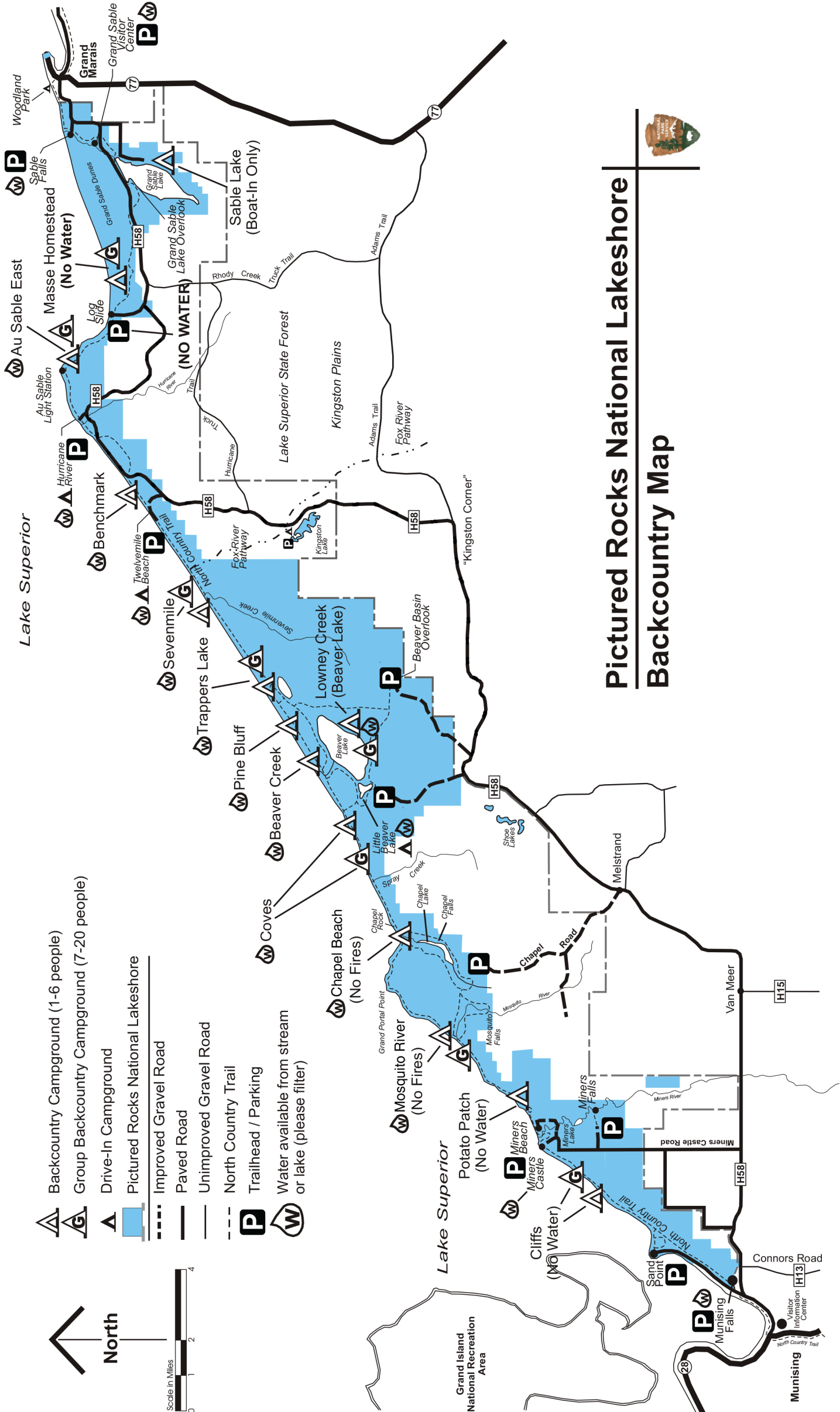




# Trail Mileage

\* backcountry campsites

|                            | Grand Sable Visitor Center | Masse Homestead* | Log Slide | Au Sable Point East* | Hurricane River C.G. | Benchmark* | Twelvemile Beach C.G. | Sevenmillel Creek* | Trappers Lake Trail | Pine Bluff* | Beaver Creek* | Coves* | Coves Group* | Chapel Beach* | Mosquito River* | Potato Patch* | Miners Castle | Cliffs* | Cliffs Group* | Sand Point Junction | Munising Falls |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|------------------|-----------|----------------------|----------------------|------------|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-------------|---------------|--------|--------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|---------|---------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Grand Sable Visitor Center |                            | 4.1              | 5.3       | 7.1                  | 8.7                  | 11.2       | 11.5                  | 14.4               | 18                  | 18.9        | 20.4          | 21.7   | 23.2         | 26            | 30.4            | 33.5          | 35.4          | 36      | 37.3          | 39.5                | 42.4           |
| Masse Homestead*           | 4.1                        |                  | 1.2       | 3                    | 4.6                  | 7.1        | 7.4                   | 10.3               | 13.9                | 14.8        | 16.3          | 17.6   | 19.1         | 21.9          | 26.3            | 29.4          | 31.3          | 31.9    | 33.2          | 35.4                |                |
| Log Slide                  | 5.3                        | 1.2              |           | 1.8                  | 3.4                  | 5.9        | 6.2                   | 9.1                | 12.7                | 13.6        | 15.1          | 16.4   | 17.9         | 20.7          | 25.1            | 28.2          | 30.1          | 32      | 30.7          | 34.2                |                |
| Au Sabel Point East*       | 7.1                        | 3                | 1.8       |                      | 1.6                  | 3          | 4.4                   | 7.3                | 10.9                | 11.8        | 13.3          | 14.6   | 16.1         | 18.9          | 23.3            | 26.4          | 28.3          | 28.9    | 30.2          | 32.4                |                |
| Hurricane River C.G.       | 8.7                        | 4.6              | 3.4       | 1.6                  |                      | 2.5        | 2.8                   | 5.7                | 9.3                 | 10.2        | 11.7          | 13     | 14.5         | 17.3          | 21.7            | 24.8          | 26.7          | 27.3    | 28.6          | 30.8                |                |
| Benchmark*                 | 11.2                       | 7.1              | 5.9       | 2.5                  |                      |            | 0.3                   | 3.2                | 6.8                 | 7.7         | 9.2           | 10.2   | 13           | 14.8          | 19.2            | 22.3          | 24.2          | 24.8    | 26.1          | 28.3                |                |
| Twelvemile Beach C.G.      | 11.5                       | 7.4              | 6.2       | 4.4                  | 2.8                  | 0.3        |                       |                    | 6.5                 | 7.4         | 8.9           | 10.2   | 11.7         | 14.5          | 18.9            | 22.9          | 23.9          | 24.5    | 25.8          | 28                  |                |
| Sevenmille Creek*          | 14.4                       | 10.3             | 9.1       | 7.3                  | 5.7                  | 2.9        | 2.9                   |                    | 3.6                 | 4.5         | 6             | 7.3    | 8.8          | 11.6          | 16              | 19.1          | 21            | 21.6    | 22.9          | 25.1                |                |
| Trappers Lake Trail        | 18                         | 13.9             | 12.7      | 10.9                 | 9.3                  | 6.8        |                       | 3.6                |                     | 0.9         | 2.4           | 3.7    | 5.2          | 8             | 12.4            | 15.5          | 17.4          | 18      | 19.3          | 21.5                |                |
| Pine Bluff*                | 18.9                       | 14.8             | 13.6      | 11.8                 | 10.2                 | 7.7        | 7.4                   | 4.5                |                     |             | 1.5           | 2.8    | 4.3          | 7.1           | 11.5            | 14.6          | 16.5          | 17.1    | 18.4          | 20.6                |                |
| Beaver Creek*              | 20.4                       | 16.3             | 15.1      | 13.3                 | 11.7                 | 9.2        | 8.9                   | 6                  | 2.4                 | 1.5         |               | 1.3    | 2.8          | 5.6           | 10              | 13.1          | 15            | 15.6    | 16.9          | 19                  |                |
| Coves*                     | 21.7                       | 17.6             | 16.4      | 14.6                 | 13                   | 10.5       | 10.2                  | 7.3                | 3.7                 | 2.8         | 1.3           |        | 1.5          | 4.3           | 8.7             | 11.8          | 13.7          | 14.3    | 15.6          | 17.8                |                |
| Coves Group*               | 23.2                       | 19.1             | 17.9      | 16.1                 | 14.5                 | 12         | 11.7                  | 8.8                | 5.2                 | 4.3         | 2.8           | 1.5    |              |               | 7.2             | 10.3          | 12.2          | 12.8    | 14.1          | 16.3                |                |
| Chapel Beach*              | 26                         | 21.9             | 20.7      | 18.9                 | 17.3                 | 14.8       | 14.5                  | 11.6               | 8                   | 7.1         | 5.6           | 4.3    | 2.8          |               | 4.4             | 7.5           | 9.4           | 10      | 11.3          | 13..5               |                |
| Mosquito River*            | 30.4                       | 26.3             | 25.1      | 23.3                 | 21.7                 | 19.2       | 18.9                  | 16                 | 12.4                | 11.5        | 10            | 8.7    | 7.2          |               |                 | 3.1           | 5             | 5.6     | 6.9           | 9.1                 |                |
| Potato Patch*              | 33.5                       | 29.4             | 28.2      | 26.4                 | 24.8                 | 22.3       | 22                    | 19.1               | 15.5                | 14.6        | 13.1          | 11.8   | 10.3         |               | 3.1             |               | 1.9           | 2.5     | 3.8           | 6                   |                |
| Miners Castle              | 35.4                       | 31.3             | 30.1      | 28.3                 | 26.7                 | 24.2       | 23.9                  | 21                 | 17.4                | 16.5        | 15            | 13.7   | 12.2         |               |                 | 1.9           |               | 0.6     | 1.9           | 4.1                 |                |
| Cliffs*                    | 36                         | 31.9             | 30.7      | 28.9                 | 27.3                 | 26.1       | 25.8                  | 21.6               | 18                  | 17.1        | 15.6          | 14.3   | 12.8         | 10            |                 |               | 0.6           |         | 1.3           | 3.5                 |                |
| Cliffs Group*              | 37.3                       | 33.2             | 32        | 30.2                 | 28.6                 | 26.1       | 25.8                  | 22.9               | 19.3                | 18.4        | 16.9          | 15.6   | 14.1         | 11.3          | 9.1             |               |               |         | 2.2           |                     |                |
| Sand Point Junction        | 39.5                       | 35.4             | 34.2      | 32.4                 | 30.8                 | 28.3       | 28                    | 25.1               | 21.5                | 20.6        | 19            | 17.8   | 16.3         | 13..5         |                 |               |               |         |               |                     |                |
| Munising Falls             | 42.4                       | 38.3             | 37.1      | 35.3                 | 33.7                 | 31.2       | 30.9                  | 28                 | 24.4                | 23.5        | 22            | 20.7   | 19.2         | 16.4          | 12              | 8.9           | 7             | 6.4     | 5.1           | 2.9                 |                |



# Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore Backcountry Map



# Trail Descriptions

## Munising Falls to Mosquito River

The North Country Trail gradually climbs up the hill/escarpment and leads you near Sand Point. The trail continues to the east overlooking Lake Superior. Past Sand Point, the trail travels on top of the cliffs in a dense forest. The trail can be wet in this area, though there is boardwalk in the wettest locations. You will hike past Cliffs group and Cliffs backcountry campgrounds before reaching Miners Castle. The North Country Trail delivers you to the paved trail at Miners Castle Overlook and Information Center. Hike towards the parking lot and around the information center. The trail picks up again on the east side of the information center. The paved path turns to dirt as you start your descent to Miners River. Once you cross over Miners River, follow the trail along the Miners Beach bluff. The trail is sandy and pine needle covered. You will have a view of Miners Beach and Lake Superior for about a mile until crossing through the Miners Beach trailhead parking lot and back up the escarpment. At the top of the hill, you will pass by the Potato Patch backcountry campground entrance. Continuing on, the trail wanders along the cliff line until near Mosquito River where it slowly descends until you follow the bridge over the river.



## Mosquito River to Spray Falls

Crossing over the Mosquito River, you can choose to head south to the Mosquito River backcountry campground or head east on the North Country Trail. The trail from the Mosquito River to the Chapel River is the most popular section of the North Country Trail. You will follow the cliffs, through the trees, over sandy windblown sections and are rewarded with views of Grand Portal Point and Lake Superior. The trail drops in elevation and travels over the Chapel Beach bluff and past the Chapel backcountry campground. Just past Chapel Beach is Chapel Creek and Chapel Rock. The stairs will lead back up on the cliffs towards Spray Falls.

## Spray Falls to Sevenmile Creek

Once you hike over the Spray Creek bridge, you have entered the Beaver Basin Wilderness. Just beyond the bridge you will have an opportunity to view Spray Falls cascading into Lake Superior. Beyond Spray Falls, you will hike up and down rustic stairs and in and out of coves. The scenery is picturesque, but the hiking can be strenuous in this section. The trail passes by Coves group campground, which is still along the cliff line. Before reaching Coves campground east of the group site, the terrain changes. The coves and cliffs make way to many miles of beach. The North Country Trail stays



along the bluff with sand and pines leading the way to Beaver Creek. The sandy trail dips down to cross over Beaver Creek then leads back up into the pines. The trail follows the bluff and parallels the beach to pass by Pine Bluff backcountry campground. If your destination is Trappers Lake or Trappers Lake Campground, take the trail about 0.5 miles east of Pine Bluff campground. If you remain on the North Country Trail, it will wind in and out of the forest and lead to Sevenmile Creek backcountry campground. Past the campground, cross the bridge over Sevenmile Creek and hike through Sevenmile group backcountry campground.

## Sevenmile Creek to Au Sable Light Station

The hike from Sevenmile Creek to Twelvemile Beach Campground is fairly level through the forest and provides views of the beach and Lake Superior. The North Country Trail leads through Twelvemile Beach Campground and picks up again before the day use parking area for Twelvemile Beach. Between the drive-in campground and H-58, the trail is soft sand and follows the shoreline. Once you cross over H-58, the trail leads into an old growth hemlock forest until crossing back over H-58. Upon crossing H-58 for the second time, the North Country Trail follows the shoreline and leads through the Hurricane River Campground. Hike through the drive-in campground and past a gate. As you pass by the gate, the Au Sable Light Station is only a mile and a half away on a level path. Note the signs on the North Country Trail that guide you to the beach to see remnants of a shipwreck. For more shipwreck information visit <http://www.nps.gov/piro/historyculture/upload/Shipwrecks.pdf>. As you near the Au Sable Light Station, the large buildings will begin to appear through the trees.

## Au Sable Light Station to Grand Sable Visitor Center

The North Country Trail guides you through the Au Sable Light Station grounds with views of the Grand Sable Dunes. It leads to the entrance to Au Sable Point East group and Au Sable Point East backcountry campgrounds. If neither of those campgrounds is your destination, continue east to the Grand Sable Dunes. The trail guides through the forest and past the Log Slide. The Log Slide viewing platform provides views of the Au Sable Light Station and the dunes. East of the Log Slide, the trail guides around the dunes and is fairly level. You will pass the trail for Masse Homestead and Masse Homestead group backcountry campgrounds. Continuing east, cross H-58 and remain inland. The North Country Trail leads to Grand Sable Lake and the day use picnic area. Travel through the picnic area to H-58 then follow H-58, which is sandwiched between Grand Sable Lake and Grand Sable Dunes. At the east side of Grand Sable Lake, there is a small trailhead where the North Country Trail leads back into the forest for a short time. The trail opens up into an old apple orchard and passes by the Grand Sable Visitor Center.



## Grand Sable Visitor Center to the east boundary of Pictured Rocks

Most visitors start or end their backpacking journey at Grand Sable Visitor Center. However, if you are continuing your journey, the North Country Trail continues east through the forest to Sable Falls and beyond. The trail leads down the walkway and steps to Sable Falls and to the shoreline of Lake Superior. In less than a mile, you will come to the eastern boundary of the park.



# Backcountry Campground Descriptions

## From West to East

**Cliffs** campground rests high above Lake Superior inland from the North Country Trail. The three campsites are in an open area with little cover between sites. During the summer months when the foliage is at its peak, you cannot see Lake Superior from the campground. There are places along the trail where to sneak a peek of Grand Island and the lake.



**Cliffs Group** campground is one mile east of Cliffs campground. It too lies high above Lake Superior and inland from the North Country Trail. You will not be able to see the lake from the campground in the summer. There are spots along the North Country Trail near the campground to get a glimpse of Grand Island and Lake Superior.



**Potato Patch** campground is inland from the North Country Trail. Follow a trail through an open field with the sounds of a waterfall at your back. The fire ring is at the entrance to the campground. Follow the trail to the right and to reach each of the three sites. Within the campground, the view of Grand Island and Lake Superior is blocked during the summer by the birch and maple leaves.



**Mosquito River** group campground is on the west side of Mosquito River just a few steps away from the North Country Trail. There is a bluff near the campsite overlooking Lake Superior, which provides easy access to Mosquito Beach and River.



**Mosquito River** campground is on the east side of the Mosquito River high above the lake. Depending upon which of the five sites you choose, you can hear the waves crashing on the cliffs or the Mosquito River flowing into Lake Superior.





# Backcountry Campground Descriptions

**Chapel Beach** campground sits on the sand bluff above Chapel Beach and Lake Superior. As you wind your way through the campground trail, the first three sites are hidden in the trees and offer a bit of privacy. The fourth site provides a view of Lake Superior and the cliff line. The fifth site is hidden among the ferns and pine trees.



**Coves Group** campground is three miles east of Chapel Beach. You are still up on the cliff line, but have started your descent towards Twelvemile Beach. There is no water access at the campground. Hike east on the North Country Trail about a quarter mile to find a trail to a small cove and beach on Lake Superior.



**Coves** campground is inland from the North Country Trail, hidden behind the pine trees and ferns. There are two entry points to the campground. The campground trail leads through the forest where you will find five campsites and two designated metal communal fire rings. There is Lake Superior and beach access from the bluff along the North Country Trail.



**Lowney Creek Group** campground is one mile from Little Beaver Lake Campground and two and a half miles inland from Lake Superior. Lowney Creek group site is in the Beaver Basin Wilderness. The trail to the campground follows the Beaver Lake shoreline. There is access to Beaver Lake.



**Lowney Creek** campground is one and a half miles from Little Beaver Lake Campground and three miles inland from Lake Superior. Lowney Creek campground is in the Beaver Basin Wilderness. The five sites are in a meadow scattered with big trees on the south shore of Beaver Lake





# Backcountry Campground Descriptions

**Trappers Lake** campground is in the heart of the Beaver Basin Wilderness. The five campsites are on the north shore of Trappers Lake. This campground is a quiet hideaway located about one mile inland from the North Country Trail.



**Trappers Lake Group** campground is a little over a mile inland from the North Country Trail and 0.2 miles east of Trappers Lake Campground. It too is on the north shore of Trappers Lake in the Beaver Basin Wilderness.



**Beaver Creek** campground is on the bluff above Lake Superior and Beaver Creek in the Beaver Basin Wilderness. The six campsites are dispersed throughout the sandy grounds, shaded by pine trees. There is one communal fire ring with a view of Lake Superior. Beaver Creek and Lake Superior are easily accessible from the campground.



**Pine Bluff** campground is on a sandy bluff above Lake Superior just off the North Country Trail. The five campsites are on a sandy open area covered in ferns with pine trees scattered throughout the area. Access the beach and Lake Superior from a trail on the bluff at the entrance to the campground.



**Sevenmile Creek** campground is on the west bank of Sevenmile Creek. The North Country Trail wanders through the campground and past the communal fire ring. The sites are separated by trees, which offer a bit of privacy. Three of the five sites are along the creek. Lake Superior access is on the east side of the creek through the Sevenmile Creek group campground





# Backcountry Campground Descriptions

**Sevenmile Creek Group** campground is on the east side of Sevenmile Creek. The North Country Trail guides you over a foot bridge, through the woods and opens up into the group site. It is a wide open area with access to Lake Superior.



**Benchmark** campground is on a sandy bluff above Lake Superior. The sites are sandy and open. There are social trails that lead down to Lake Superior, but it is a steep climb back to your campsite. When hiking from the west, walk through Twelvemile Beach Campground to the trailhead and day use area to connect back to the North Country Trail.



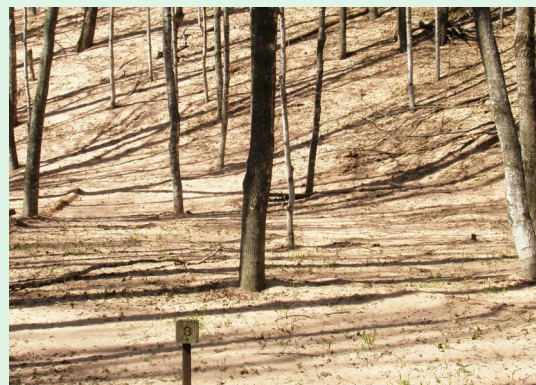
**Au Sable Point East Group** campground is 0.2 miles west of the Au Sable Light Station and inland from the North Country Trail. The group site is surrounded by a coniferous forest. There is access to Lake Superior with a view of the Grand Sable Dunes.



**Au Sable Point East** campground is next to the Au Sable Point East group campground. Due to the dense forest, you are unable to see the neighboring campground. The six campsites are scattered throughout the trees.



**Masse Homestead** campground is at the base of the dunes (south side) and sheltered due to the thick forest canopy. The three campsites are close together at the base of the dunes.





# Backcountry Campground Descriptions

**Masse Homestead Group** campground is to the west of the regular campground. It too is at the base of the dunes in a thick forest canopy.



**Grand Sable Lake** campground is the only campsite in Pictured Rocks that is boat-in only. Put your vessel in at the Grand Sable Lake boat launch and travel east to this site. It rests on the east shore of Grand Sable Lake



## Human Waste in the Backcountry

The Lakeshore backcountry serves some 15,000 overnight hikers annually, plus thousands of day hikers. With this many visitors, human waste is a public health, ecological, and aesthetic concern. To minimize impact to the landscape and other hikers, please follow these methods

Urinating: Select a location at least 200 feet from the trail or water. Think of the “next person” who may visit that area.

Fecal matter: Follow the steps below .



Select a location at least 200 feet away from a water source, trail, and campsite.



Dig a cat hole, 6-8 inches deep



Bury all human waste. Scatter leaves and duff on top. Pack out all toilet paper and sanitary items. Use a zip lock bag.

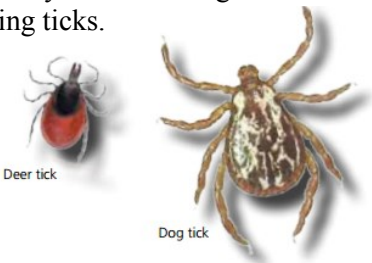
## Ticks

While it is a good idea to take preventive measures against ticks year-round, be extra vigilant in warmer months (April-September) when ticks are most active. A few things to remember:

- Avoid wooded and bushy areas with high grass and leaf litter.
- Walk in the center of trails.
- Repel ticks with DEET or permethrin. Use repellents that contain 20% or more DEET (N, N-diethyl-m-toluamide) on exposed skin for protection that lasts up to several hours. Always follow product instructions. Parents should apply this product to their children, avoiding hands, eyes, and mouth.
- Use products that contain permethrin on clothing.
- Treat clothing and gear, such as boots, pants, socks and tents. It remains protective through several washings. Pre-treated clothing is available and remains protective for up to 70 washings.
- Other repellents registered by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) may be found at <http://cfpub.epa.gov/oppref/insect/>.

## Find and Remove Ticks from Your Body

- Bathe or shower as soon as possible after coming indoors (preferably within two hours) to wash off and more easily find ticks.
- Conduct a full-body tick check using a hand-held or full-length mirror to view all parts of your body upon return from tick-infested areas. Parents should check their children for ticks under the arms, in and around the ears, inside the belly button, behind the knees, between the legs, around the waist, and especially in their hair.
- Examine gear and pets. Ticks can ride into the home on clothing and pets, then attach to a person later, so carefully examine pets, coats, and day packs. Tumble dry clothes on high heat for an hour to kill remaining ticks.





# Kayak the Lakeshore



Miles of colorful sandstone cliffs from 50-200 feet high rising directly from Lake Superior’s rugged shoreline and long stretches of white sand beach invite kayakers to explore the beautiful Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore. Within the national lakeshore, put-in points for kayaks are located at Sand Point, Miners Beach, Twelvemile Beach and Hurricane River. Additional put-in points in the Munising area include Grand Island Landing, Munising City Marina, Munising/ Brown’s Addition boat ramp, and the Anna River. In Grand Marais, you may launch at the Grand Marais harbor beach and marina.

A backcountry camping permit is required for overnight stays at Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore. Reservations are possible, and there is a fee for backcountry camping. Pets are not permitted in the lakeshore’s backcountry. Campgrounds easiest to identify from Lake Superior are Mosquito Beach, Chapel Beach, Beaver Creek, and Sevenmile Creek. Other campgrounds such as Coves, Pine Bluff, Benchmark, and Au Sable Point East are also accessible but a little more difficult to identify. Backcountry campgrounds NOT accessible from Lake Superior are Cliffs, Potato Patch, Coves Groups site, Lowney Creek Trappers Lake, Masse Homestead and Grand Sable Lake Boat in.

### Weather/ Marine Forecast

Lake Superior is unpredictable! Kayakers must be prepared for cold temperatures, high winds, fog, and rough seas that may occur at any time. Be constantly alert to changing conditions and should consult the current marine forecast before starting any trip (NOAA 906-475- 5212 or Marine Band Radio Channel 16).

Summer storms are common on Lake Superior. Most storm systems come from the northwest -- you are fully exposed to the winds when paddling on Lake Superior. There are no protected anchorages at any backcountry or front country campgrounds.

### Hypothermia

Hypothermia occurs when your body’s core temperature is reduced below normal levels. Cold water conducts heat away from your body 25 times faster than cold air. Uncontrollable shaking, slurred speech or difficulties moving are all warning signs -- you must be warmed immediately. If submerged in Lake Superior, it is important to conserve body heat to increase your chances for survival. Wear your flotation device, huddle with others or pull legs together and up to chest to help conserve heat. Do not attempt to swim long distances

### Special Considerations

The Pictured Rocks cliffs extend for 15 miles and include sheer walls all the way to the water line. These exposed cliffs offer no way off the water if wind and waves increase.



### Hiawatha Water Trail

The Hiawatha Water Trail is 120 miles long with 42 miles in Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore. The trail runs from Big Bay to Grand Marais, Michigan, on Lake Superior’s south shore. There are eight backcountry campgrounds easily accessible from Lake Superior, shown on the map on page 15.

**Special Considerations** The Pictured Rocks cliffs extend for 15 miles and include sheer walls all the way to the water line. These exposed cliffs offer no way off the water if wind and waves increase. Be aware of boat tours that leave Munising on a regular basis during the summer months. Tours run fairly close to the shoreline with a turnaround point at Chapel Beach. Give them plenty of room.

Wet or dry suits are recommended due to Lake Superior’s cold water. U.S. Coast Guard approved Personal Flotation Devices (PFD) and noise making devices such as a whistle are required for each person.

Be prepared with provisions for at least one extra day. In your gear, include a first aid kit, emergency signal device, self-contained stove, an extra paddle, compass, maps, insect repellent, tow line, rain gear, waterproof matches, and dry storage containers.

# Kayak Safety

## Weather and Lake Superior

Lake Superior can become hazardous for any size vessel even in moderate weather. The weather can suddenly change, exposing you to cold temperatures, wind, fog, lightning and rough seas. Except for shallow beaches, Lake Superior’s temperatures rarely reach above 55 degrees. Hypothermia can happen in as little as 15 minutes. Before you go, check the marine forecast. **PFD’s (personal flotation devices) should be worn at all times on Lake Superior.**



## Pictured Rocks Cliffs

Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore has 15 miles of cliffs including sheer walls all the way to the water line offering no escape from the elements and the wake from other vessels. Boat tours leave Munising on a regular basis during the summer months. They run fairly close to the shoreline with a turnaround point at Chapel Beach. Give them plenty of room and be prepared for their wake.



Recreation Kayak



Sea Kayak

## Sea Kayaks vs. Recreational Kayaks

Sea kayaks with a spray skirt are recommended because they are safer on Lake Superior. Recreational kayaks are designed for inland waters and can be dangerous in high winds and big waves. Sea kayaks for single person use are generally 16 to 19 feet long, with hatches and bulkheads providing flotation in the front and back. Recreational kayaks are usually 10 to 14 feet long with a large open cockpit and at most one hatch and bulkhead.

## Instruction and Trip Planning

Instruction and competence on proper techniques including rescues or using a guide are recommended for beginners or those who have never kayaked on Lake Superior. Refer to our website [www.nps.gov/piro/planyourvisit/commercial-services.htm](http://www.nps.gov/piro/planyourvisit/commercial-services.htm) for further information. A backcountry permit is required to stay overnight in Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore [www.nps.gov/piro/planyourvisit/backcountry.htm](http://www.nps.gov/piro/planyourvisit/backcountry.htm).

## Leave a Float Plan

A float plan contains important information such as your name and address, vessel description, number of people in your group, safety equipment, planned route, length of trip and return date. Leave your float plan with a friend or family member and tell them who to call if you are overdue or an emergency arises. A blank U.S. Coast Guard Float Plan is provided on the back of this brochure.

## U.S. Coast Guard Equipment Requirements

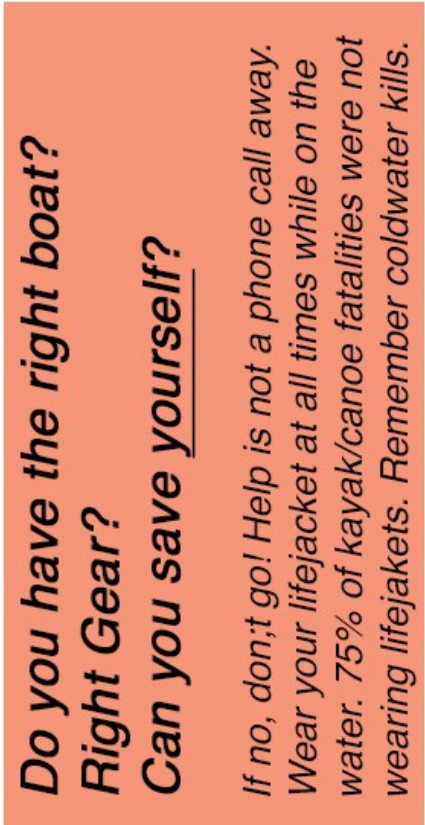
All vessels on Lake Superior are required to have a wearable Personal Flotation Device per person on board and a sound providing device that is audible for one half mile for 4 to 6 seconds (such as a horn or whistle). When operating from sunset to sunrise and in or near areas of reduced visibility, use navigational lights that may be seen by others and be equipped with a visual distress signal.

### Preparation Checklist

- |  |                                       |  |  |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Flotation Device (PFD) | <input type="checkbox"/> Marine radio | <input type="checkbox"/> Fill out Float Plan | <input type="checkbox"/> Paddle float              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Whistle                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Wet suit     | <input type="checkbox"/> Check forecast      | <input type="checkbox"/> Too rough: go another day |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bilge pump                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Sprayskirt   | <input type="checkbox"/> Bring a partner     | <input type="checkbox"/> Lighting device           |



# Kayak Accessible Backcountry Map





# Beaver Basin Wilderness

The Beaver Basin Wilderness was officially designated by the Omnibus Public Lands Act of 2009, signed into law on March 30, 2009.

Incorporating 11,740 acres, 16% of Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, the wilderness designation fulfills an important element of the park’s 2004 General Management Plan and provides permanent legal protection for this spectacular part of the park, under the 1964 Wilderness Act. The Wilderness Act defines wilderness as “an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain; an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements of human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions; which generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man’s work substantially unnoticed; has outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined type of recreation; and which may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic or historical value.”

## The Beaver Basin Wilderness:

- Includes excellent examples of glacial geology, including post-glacial melt water channels, escarpments and ancient beach ridges.
- Includes extensive beech-maple upland hardwood forest and wonderful spring wildflowers.
- Has extensive wetlands and clear streams providing habitat for native coaster brook trout, largemouth and smallmouth bass, northern pike and other fish.
- Provides excellent habitat for black bear, grey wolf, fisher and American marten, migrating songbirds, waterfowl and upland game birds.



- Includes 8.4 miles of North Country National Scenic Trail, 8.5 miles of other park trails and 6 designated overnight backcountry campsites.
- Is open for day hiking, overnight backpacking, canoeing, kayaking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, ice climbing, hunting, fishing and more. Electric boat motors may be used on Little Beaver and Beaver Lakes. Motorboats on Lake Superior may beach along the waterfront adjacent to the designated wilderness.
- Other forms of motorized recreation or mechanical transport within the designated wilderness are prohibited.
- Offers opportunities for quiet, solitude, physical challenge, education and spiritual renewal forever.

As a visitor to the Beaver Basin Wilderness, you have a special obligation to use and enjoy the area in ways that are consistent with its management as wilderness. Be courteous to others who are seeking a wilderness experience. Travel and camp quietly. Use Leave No Trace camping techniques. Leave nothing but footprints, take nothing but photos. Let the wilderness change you!





# Leave No Trace Principles

## PLAN AHEAD AND PREPARE

- ◆ Know the regulations and special concerns for the area you'll visit.
- ◆ *Prepare for extreme weather, hazards, and emergencies.*
- ◆ Schedule your trip to avoid times of high use.
- ◆ *Visit in small groups when possible. Consider splitting larger groups into smaller groups.*
- ◆ Repackage food to minimize waste.
- ◆ *Use a map and compass to eliminate the use of marking paint, rock cairns or flagging.*



## TRAVEL AND CAMP ON DURABLE SURFACES

- ◆ Durable surfaces include established trails and campsites, rock, gravel, dry grasses or snow.
- ◆ *Protect riparian areas by camping at least 200 feet from lakes and streams.*
- ◆ Good campsites are found, not made. Altering a site is not necessary.
- ◆ *In popular areas, concentrate use on existing trails and campsites. Walk single file in the middle of the trail, even when wet or muddy.*
- ◆ Keep campsites small. Focus activity in areas where vegetation is absent.
- ◆ *In pristine areas: Disperse use to prevent the creation of campsites and trails. Avoid places where impacts are just beginning.*

## DISPOSE OF WASTE PROPERLY

- ◆ Pack it in, pack it out. Inspect your campsite and rest areas for trash or spilled foods. Pack out all trash, leftover food, and litter.
- ◆ *Deposit solid human waste in cat holes dug 6 to 8 inches deep at least 200 feet from water, camp, and trails. Cover and disguise the cat hole when finished.*
- ◆ Pack out toilet paper and hygiene products.
- ◆ *To wash yourself or your dishes, carry water 200 feet away from streams or lakes and use small amounts of biodegradable soap. Scatter strained dishwater.*

## LEAVE WHAT YOU FIND

- ◆ Preserve the past: examine, but do not touch, cultural or historic structures and artifacts.
- ◆ *Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them.*
- ◆ Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species.
- ◆ *Do not build structures, furniture, or dig trenches.*

## MINIMIZE CAMPFIRE IMPACTS

- ◆ Campfires can cause lasting impacts to the backcountry.
- ◆ *Use a lightweight stove for cooking and enjoy a candle lantern for light.*
- ◆ Where fires are permitted, use established fire rings.
- ◆ Keep fires small. Only use sticks from the ground that can be broken by hand.
- ◆ *Burn all wood and coals to ash, put out campfires completely, then scatter cool ashes.*

## RESPECT WILDLIFE

- ◆ Observe wildlife from a distance. Do not follow or approach them.
- ◆ *Never feed animals. Feeding wildlife damages their health, alters natural behaviors, and exposes them to predators and other dangers.*
- ◆ Protect wildlife and your food by storing rations and trash securely.
- ◆ *Control pets at all times, or leave them at home.*
- ◆ Avoid wildlife during sensitive times: mating, nesting, raising young, or winter.

## BE CONSIDERATE OF OTHER VISITORS

- ◆ *Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience.*
- ◆ Be courteous. Yield to other users on the trail.
- ◆ *Step to the downhill side of the trail when encountering pack stock.*
- ◆ Take breaks and camp away from trails and other visitors.
- ◆ *Let nature's sounds prevail. Avoid loud voices and noises.*